



EAST COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

October 5, 2011

The Hon. Valerie Ervin, President
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue, Suite 600
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Ms. Ervin:

I am writing to you on behalf of the East County Citizens Advisory Board (ECCAB) regarding Bill 25-11, which would establish a youth curfew in Montgomery County.

While we are encouraged that overall crime rates in the County are down, ECCAB remains concerned about the safety and well-being of the youth in our community. For this reason, the Board supports Bill 25-11 with the amendments proposed by the County Executive which create additional exceptions, and make violations a civil, rather than criminal, offense.

However, we strongly believe that the curfew will be most effective if both young people and their parents know about the law and how it applies to them. If this legislation passes, we urge the County to broadly publicize the details of the law, particularly in venues frequented by youth. We are confident that most families will make every effort to comply with this law once they understand it.

In addition, the Board believes that adequate training of police officers on the limitations of the curfew is essential to ensuring that it is enforced fairly. The Montgomery County Police Department ("Department") should be allotted funding to implement a thorough training program to ensure that officers make the best possible judgments when called upon to enforce this law. These measures will both increase compliance and enhance community confidence in our law enforcement.

Given the concerns expressed by some community members about disparate implementation, we would also like the bill to include a requirement that the Department provide semi-annual reports to the County Council for the first two years. These reports should include information on officer training, the number of citations issued, and any complaints about enforcement.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed legislation.

Sincerely,

Marva R. Deskins, Chair

cc: Isiah Leggett, County Executive



Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center

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